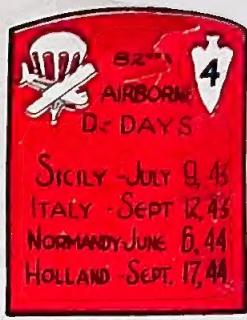




# THE "ALL AMERICAN" PARAGLIDE

\* EUROPEAN FINAL \* VE DAY MAY 1945

82<sup>ND</sup> "ALL AMERICAN" AIRBORNE DIVISION \*



## 21<sup>ST</sup> GERMAN ARMY SURRENDERS TO 82<sup>ND</sup> DIVISION

L.T. GEN. VON TIPPESKIRCH'

Entire German 21<sup>st</sup> Army Surrenders to All American

By Vernon C. Havener

Paratroopers and glidermen of Major General James M. Gavin's gallant 82nd Airborne Division, who opened the Allied assault on Hitler's "Festung Europa" with a daring airborne invasion of Sicily in the summer of 1943, fittingly delivered a final coup to the crumbling Third Reich with the capture, May 3, of an entire German army.

With his units badly battered and hopelessly caught between overpowering Russian forces on the east and American, British and Canadian ones on the west, Lieutenant General von Tippeskirch surrendered his 21<sup>st</sup> Army to the 82nd at Ludwigslust.

General Gavin called the surrender of an entire army to a single division, "without precedent in American military history".

The surrender followed the 82nd's assault across the Elbe River at Bleckede early on the morning of April 30. The crossing was made by boat under what Major M. B. Ridgway, XVIII<sup>th</sup> Airborne Corps commander, termed, "the heaviest artillery barrage since Normandy". Once across the river, the paratroopers and glidermen rapidly stormed over heavily-mined roads and fields, sweeping all opposition before them and capturing prisoners by the hundreds.

By May 3, prisoners were pouring into the division cages so fast it was impossible to keep an exact tally. Intelligence officers estimated that 150,000 prisoners passed through the division area. On May 7, the day the German capitulation was signed in Rheims, there were 34,281 prisoners on hand. More than 2,000 units were represented in the cages.

In addition to General von Tippeskirch and his entire staff, the 82d captured nine other general officers and a great deal of lesser "brass".

All night and all day the din of wagons, the cllop of hoofs, the rumble of vehicles echoed along the German roads.

These were the once-proud men of the Wehrmacht who overran all Western Europe, spilled into Africa and were at the gates of Stalingrad and Cairo. But, in the first week of May, 1945, theirs was not an army of conquest; it was an army of defeat.

The German army was not flanked by rows of shimmering swastikas as it once was. On every side, crude, home-made white flags flew from every house. The army marched over bridges marked for demolition, but never blown. It wound through towns still standing. The Germans did not choose to fight here; their villages were not leveled like so many that had left behind them all over Europe.

The Germans seemed neither elated nor dejected. They had given up the war. They were intent only upon getting away from it.

Roads were jammed almost beyond description. The Germans moved

### 82<sup>ND</sup> Airborne Reconnaissance 1<sup>st</sup> to meet Russians

Grabow, Germany — A meeting between the Russians and the Americans on the Northern Front took place at 9:30 A. M. on May 3rd, one mile East of Grabow, Germany.

Elements of the 82d "All American" Airborne Division Reconnaissance Platoon met a Russian motorized Infantry Column just two days after they had first established their Bleckede Bridgehead over the Northern Elbe River.

Sgt. Vernon E. French in the first Armored Recon. Jeep, is given credit for actually spotting the forward Russian elements. Out of a column of dust roared Sherman Tanks with Russian motorized infantry swarming all over them.

Roaring to a stop, the Russian infantry jumped off their Shermans, and went into a series of wild gesticulations with the waiting Americans. Token exchanges of Russian sausages, vodka for the ever-popular American cigarettes followed the back-slapping and vigorous hand shaking.

Another historic meeting passed into fiesta. Those in the first 82d Recon. Jeep were: Lt. Joseph V. DeMasi, Lt. Richard O. Prendergast, Sgt. French, P. F. C. Robert S. Bastrow. At 1:00 P. M. the meeting was made official, when Brig. General Francis A. March, 82d Division Art. General, flew in by Cub and was introduced to General Major (Brig. General) Firsovich, Commander of the Russian 8th Mechanized Corps of the 49th Russian Army. Later in the afternoon, Major General James M. Gavin, Commanding General of the 82d Airborne Division, called at the Russian General's new C. P. Prior to the meeting, at 9:30 Thursday morning the 82d Recon Platoon had taken nineteen towns in two days, covering twenty five miles since the initial breakthrough on the lower Elbe at Bleckede. Just three days before the Recon Platoon had made the initial boat-crossing reconnaissance for the Division Bridgehead assault.

It is befitting that the 82d "All Americans", so named because they had men from every State in World War I, should be the Division to meet the Russians. The first Airborne Troops overseas, the men of the 82d A/B Division are veterans of ten Beachhead Bridgehead Assaults, geographically ranging from their initial jump in Sicily to their recent crossing of the Elbe.

Their reaction to the 82d Swingband, however, was not quite so enthusiastic. Thousands showed up for the show at one of the Displaced Person's Centers but few seemed to understand the music.

Each number was followed by loud applause, apparently out of courtesy, but it remained for the "Beer Barrel Polka" and the "Volga Boatman" to stir any visible emotion during the actual playing.

### 82<sup>ND</sup> ELBE BRIDGEHEAD LAST IN EUROPE

#### First and Last European Bridgeheads Accredited to 82<sup>ND</sup> AIRBORNE "TROOPERS"

Bleckede, Germany — Bridgehead Beachhead No. 11 for elements of the 82d "All American" Airborne Division was made on April 30 when the 82d crossed the Northern Elbe at Bleckede for the last bridgehead in the European War. It is befitting that the Skyborne Soldiers who made the last bridgehead assault were also in on the initial sock at Festung Europa two years before when they made the D-Day drop into Sicily July 9, 1943.

Making the initial assault was the 505th Parachute Combat Team which also made the initial jump into Sicily two years earlier. Within 24 hours the assault team had pushed 10,000 yards. The 504th and 325th Combat Teams moved through and with the aid of their old friends from Combat Command B of the 7th Armored pushed 52,000 yards by the second evening. Consolidating the huge arc, the Division bussed itself taking German prisoners by the tens of thousands and waited for the oncoming Russians.

With typical Airborne aggressiveness the 82d Airborne, seaborne, foot-borne mud sloggers had gotten off their French 40 and 8'er railroad freight cars after a restless three day ride to go right into the fight. The night before the assault when Division Reconnaissance Patrols crossed the river, neither the engineers who were to man the assault boats nor the regiment which was to make the assault had arrived from Cologne on the 350 mile train ride.

The Russians were met amid scenes of wild jubilation on May 3 and one war for the 82d was unofficially over. Prior to the Bleckede-Elbe operation in Northern Germany the "All Americans" had played a major role in the operation to close the Ruhr Sack. In both operations Major Gen. "Jimmy" Gavin's boys of the 82d were under the 18th Airborne Corps commanded by Major Gen. "Matt" Ridgway, erstwhile 82d commander.

Other beachhead-bridgeheads established or assaulted by elements of the 82d include skydrop assaults on Sicily, Salerno, Normandy, and Holland; a sea entry at Anzio, and the vital river crossing assaults at the Volturno, Douve, Merderet, Maas, Waal, Rhine, and Elbe rivers.

During their 371 combat days, "Slim Jim's" boys have fought in 6 countries and been assigned or attached to every British, American or Canadian Army except the British 8th which they fought beside throughout Italy.

W.F.D.



Field Marshall Sir Bernard Montgomery, 21<sup>st</sup> Allied Army Group and Maj. Gen. Mathew Bunker Ridgway, 18<sup>th</sup> Airborne Corps, inspect the 82<sup>ND</sup> All American Division Elbe River bridgehead. Said Ridgway, "the heaviest Artillery barrage Since Normandy"



Troopers of the 82<sup>ND</sup> "All American" Airborne Division captured in Sicily and liberated two years later by the same Division. Ranney, Grisez, Rinkowsky, Manual and Lindsey.

### Other 82<sup>ND</sup> Division Firsts

In the two years since the 82d piled down the gangplank at Casablanca May 10, 1943, the Division has compiled a record unequalled by any in the Allied Armies. Here are a few of their firsts and mosts: The First U. S. Airborne Division (on Aug 15, 1942 the 82d and 101st Airborne Divisions were formed out of the old 82d Inf. Div.)

The First U. S. Airborne Division overseas-April 29, 1943.

The First U. S. Airborne Division to see combat-Sicily, July 9, 1943.

The First ground troops to enter Naples.

The First Allied troops across the Dutch-German border.

The First across the Volturno River in Italy.

The First across the Rhine (Sept, 1944, Nijmegen, Holland).

The First across the Douve and Merderet Rivers in Normandy.

The First to stop, and hurl back Von Rundstedt's forces in the Battle of the Bulge.

The first town liberated on the Western front (Ste. Mere Eglise).

The First through the Siegfried Line in the Allied spring offensive.

The First Bridgehead in Europe, Sicily-July 9, 1943.

The last Bridgehead in Europe, Elbe-Bleckede April 30, 1945.

The most Airborne Invasions (4) Sicily, Italy, Normandy, Holland.

More combat days than other Airborne Division, (371).

The First troops to meet the Russians in North Germany (Grabow).

The 82d "All American" Airborne Division has also been in more countries than any division in the European Theater (French Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Sicily, Italy, Ireland, England, France, Holland, Belgium, and 3 times into Germany). They have captured nearly 200,000 prisoners in 5 campaigns or approximately 25 per man. Prisoners included Lt Gen. Von Tippeskirch and his 21<sup>st</sup> German Army, the first army to history to surrender to a lone American division.

W.F.D.

### The Troopers Come Home 500 Kilometer Walk From East Prussia

Veteran paratroopers of the 82d "All American" Airborne Division, captured on Sicily in the first invasion of Europe are liberated by their old buddies from the same division in Northern Germany less than a week before V-E day.

Almost two years ago the first Airborne Division overseas made its jump spearheading the drive on Sicily. Many 82d paratroopers including these men from Combat Bn X, landed in widely scattered groups. Dropped in a hornets' nest of Heinies, they fought furiously inflicting casualties on 7 times their number, but by the end of the 2d day, were cut off, and surrounded with anti-munition exhausted.

Today, after a 500 kilometer walk from East Prussia, begun on the 27th of January, these 2 year veterans of German prisoner of war camps returned to the same division now or the lower Elbe.

The first Yank we saw," said Pfc. Bill Grisez, who looks like "Buffalo Bill" was a Sicilian

from the same gang we jumped with. He told us we'd missed the show at Salerno, Volturno, Anzio, Normandy, Holland, the Bulge, the Siegfried Line, and the Elbe, but let me tell you we did some travelling too. Why in Sicily we never even had time to open our K rations. These here are the first K rations we've ever eaten. Say Colonel Gavin is a Major General now. He had our combat team in Sicily. But back to our trip around Europe. First they took us to a transient Prison Camp near Naples. I hear you lucky stiffs took that town later and then occupied it for a while. Anyhow we were only there 2 weeks and they shipped us by train to Stalag 2 B at Hammerstein near the German Polish border.

The trip took 6 nights and 5 days." Hey Bill, tell them about the maggots at Hammerstein,"

chimed in John Rinkowsky, Sicilian speaking American who had jumped the same plane as Grisez and more recently helped talk them through the Russian lines. "Oh yes," Bill said. "They called it barley soup. It was all we got so we ate it anyway, but that barley was full of worms. We were so damned hungry we had to pick the worms out and try to forget it, but it sure wasn't like this chow we're getting now. Some could stand it, but hell, I'm still healthy.

"From Stalag 2 B they forced us to go to labor farms. Let me tell you about the American Red Cross. Those people saved our lives. Twice the Geneva people came around, and I guess the Germans were afraid to hold out on us, because regular as clock-work, in came the Red Cross boxes. They sent us new uniforms too. Our old ones were in rags. I've hung on to this jump jacket.

They got our boots, all but Garci here, he fought like hell and somehow talked them into letting him keep his. You usually don't talk those people into anything.

We were pretty well skin and bones till the Red Cross Packages started coming. I'll take my tam off to them anytime. The Germans always said the chocolate and coffee were American propaganda."

"We'd stop 'em cold on that," Lindsey popped in. "We asked them if they could eat any of their propaganda."

"Speaking of propaganda," said Dick Ranney, who joined the capture at Anzio, "we used to sneak a paper from one of the Polish

girls who worked on the farm. The news was always 3 weeks late but we got some of the war news. During the Bulge, the Germans said both the Russian and Allied fronts were being smashed. They really believed they would win."

"Yea," said Bill, who seemed to be the spokesman for the group, "they thought they were going to win, but then the Russians started to attack again. That's when we started our 500 kilometer walk. On the night of the 27th of Jan the Russians were only 4 miles away from Dick's farm and 12 from mine. They made us march. We were praying to get caught by the Russians but with 3 guard companies it's hard to stall very much. We started out in knee deep snow with home-made sleds. At the end of the first day they made us throw the sleds away and carry everything on our back.

It was bitter cold and lots of guys got trench foot, but somehow all of our gang stayed with it, and we've been walking ever since.

Two days ago after our guards had thrown down their weapons and run away, we met the Russians. They asked Rinkowsky if we wanted a ride, but do you know not one of us said yes?

After 500 kilometers, we weren't going to ride the last few miles.

"There were 400 Americans, 300 French, 100 Serbs, and 300 Russians in our prisoner march from East Prussia. At least that's how many we started with. We used to tell them the Russians were right behind us. They were

scared to death. They honestly believed that the Germans and Americans were going to join and fight the Russians. Those guards had their families, sisters, and everything with them. It got so bad near the end we had to laugh.

A couple of days ago they all took off. They wanted us to take them prisoner but we told 'em we didn't want to cheat our Russian allies out of their prize catch. We got these Ligers when they took off. For 2 years they had us where they wanted us. I wonder where they are now? Nobody even wants them.

"Boy were we ever surprised when we recognized the 1st Yank we saw. I still don't know his name but he had that good old 82d "AA" patch on and I know he jumped with us in Sicily. They tell me there aren't many of those fellows left. That was the fightest bunch of Joe's I ever hope to see. Well anyhow we're back and it's great. Boy were we surprised. We kept hearing of the old 82d all over Europe. I guess you guys have fought in more countries than any of the divisions. We thought sure you'd be home by now. How does this rotation work? We've had a long rest, how about us trading places with a couple of the old gang? They can go home and we've got a couple of personal scores to settle. How does this rotation work?"

Well Bill, that's another long story, but you get some shuteye now and we'll take you down to see your old buddies in the regiment tomorrow.

W.F.D.

### A TRIBUTE TO AND FROM OUR LATE GREAT PRESIDENT

THE WHITE HOUSE WASHINGTON

March 16, 1945

Dear General Gavin:

The postage stamps which your men obtained at the Nijmegen Post Office have arrived. The letter and stamps will be placed in my collection.

Will you convey to every man in your organization my thanks for this thoughtful gift and my appreciation of their gallant conduct throughout this war--especially in the Nijmegen operation.

Very sincerely yours,

Franklin D. Roosevelt

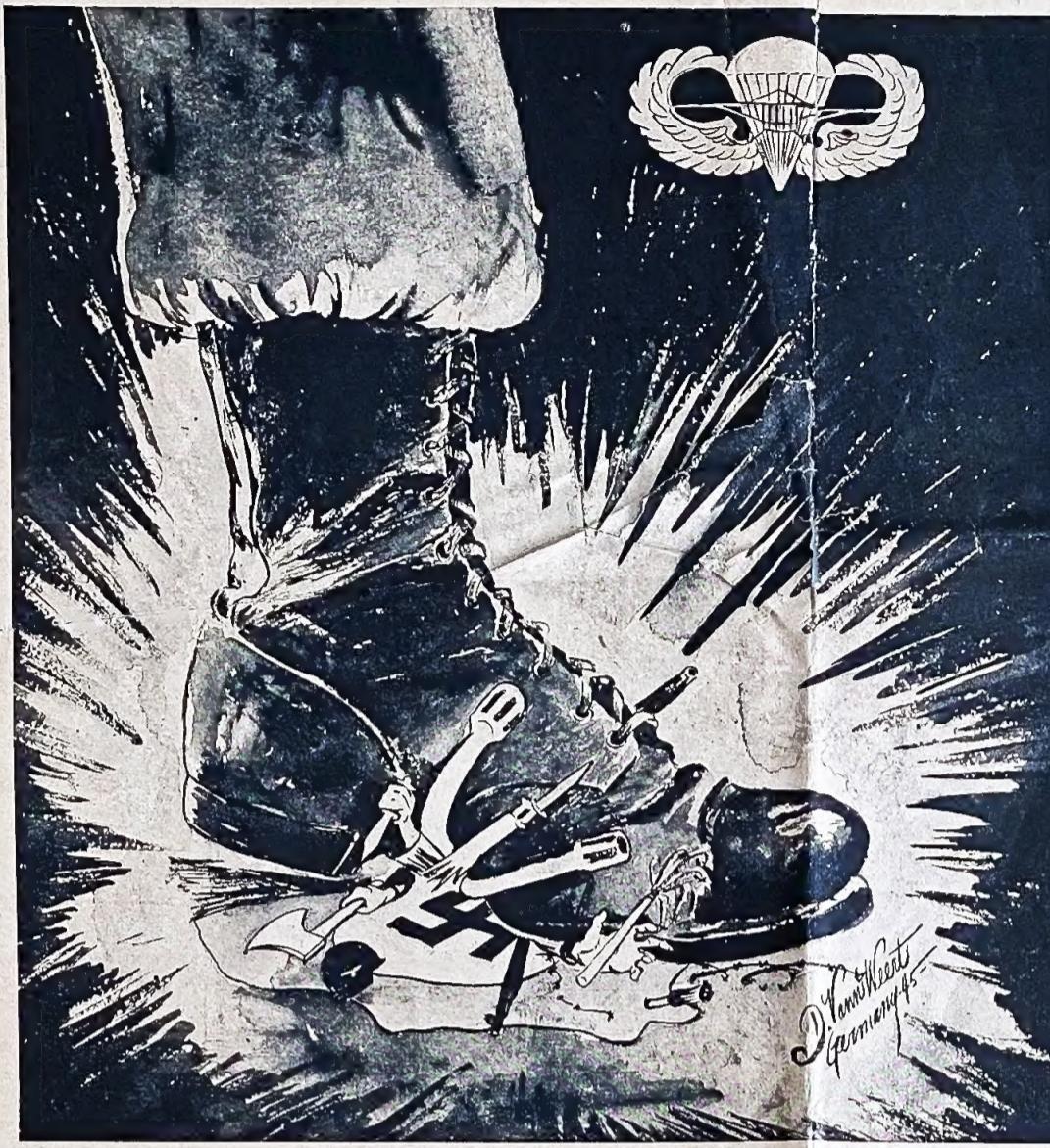
Major General James M. Gavin  
Commanding General  
82d Airborne Division  
APO 230, New York

The "All American" Paraglide is published by and for the men of the 82d "All American" Airborne Division:  
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### Purpose

The Paraglide is a supplement to your unit newspaper. The purpose of the "All American" Paraglide is to provide a souvenir for the men of the Division, their parents and their friends. Specific mention of units and individuals is avoided whenever possible so that all material may have universal appeal. Letters to the Editor will be printed in succeeding editions and contributions of a general nature that appeal to individuals in all units will be appreciated. Send a copy of the Paraglide to your hometown paper together with your home address, your unit, and a line or two about yourself. There is enough general material here to give your hometown editor a good story.

# THE ARCH OF TRIUMPH



### EDITORIAL PAGE

#### V-E DAY

##### What does it mean?

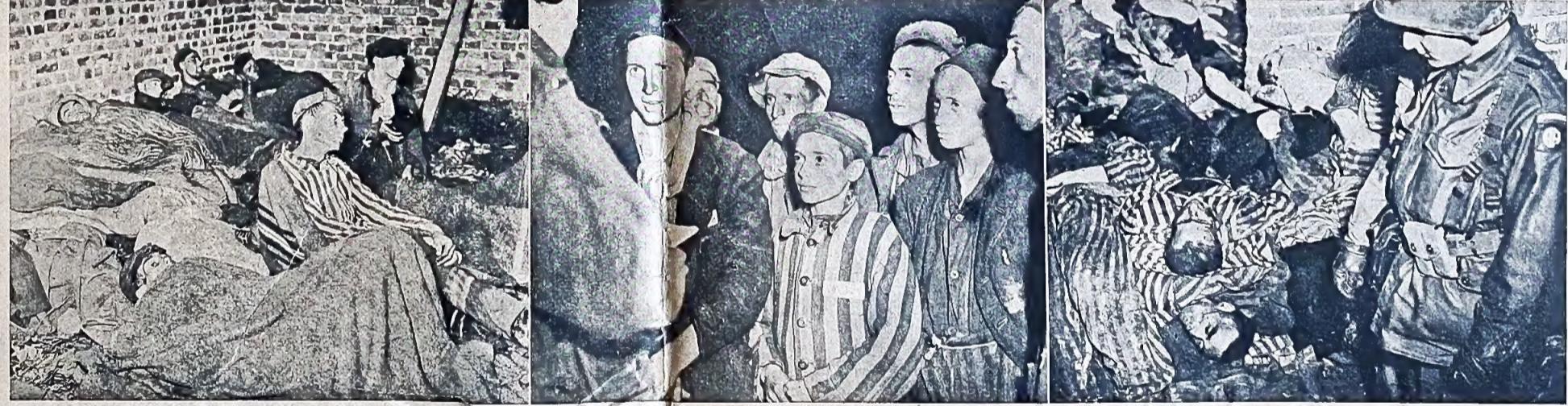
For the men of the 82d Division V-E Day was not an emotional day of celebration, triumph or frivolity. Some of us considered it the end of another campaign, just one of seven since Sicily, others couldn't even see that much in the occasion. For most of us the campaign had ended with the surrender of the 21st German Army to the division several days before V-E Day. Some of us, tired from many months of combat, were too mentally lazy to give European victory much thought. Most had hoped for it many times and certainly no division had fought more fiercely, or played a greater role in the ultimate German defeat, yet what did V-E Day really mean when it came. A short rest, yes, but then what? Many questions remained unanswered. Was this really victory? Then came the point system. It was part of the answer. Some would agree. At least a few, but when? We don't know. How about those in the Pacific? V-E Day, what does it mean to them? The men in Europe want to go home. That's tough, what about us? must be their reaction. "Our war isn't over." V-E Day and a chance for some of those G. I. fighting through Europe to go home. Sure, the war is over for them. Then what are we doing over here on these damned islands?" V-E Day means something different to us all, but what? What should it mean to the European who has been liberated after years of Nazi domination? Freedom? Democracy? Does it? What should it mean to the U.S. soldier in Europe? The end of our responsibility? Does it? What should it mean to the man in the Pacific? Is he forgotten and abandoned? Is he? What does it mean to those at home? Frivolity? Does it really? And what does it mean to the Germans or other war criminals, still living, breathing, and laughing in Europe, or anyplace else where concentration camps can flourish and freedom is defined as "a seven letter joke".

What does V-E Day mean? Is it the end of a job, the end of a job in Europe, an excuse for a holiday, or is it a day, a time, a period of thought and action toward the war not finished and the jobs still to be begun? V-E Day, what does it mean to you?

### HERKIMER HOEDAGGER



by D. Vann Weert



### A PICTORIAL EDITORIAL

Living and dead in the same room lying side by side, the living too weak to move themselves much less the dead.

Robert W. 23, and Paul 13, they were Jews from Budapest. Both had been in for three years.

French, Dutch, Poles, and Jews piled in rows to rot and serve as warning for those still living who might want to resist the super race.

82nd Division photos by Henry Grotte

behind me the click of G. I. dentures was just as loud. The poor wretch in front of me was a pitiable sight, his eyes rolled wildly and tremors shook his frame. It was apparent he entertained small hope of seeing Newton Center again. Other than this the Recon was working as usual.

On the flat expanse of water we rowed softly and steadily, stopping only as an occasional flare lit up the river farther down stream. Each time we froze. (Freezing is the same as pulling your head between your shoulders during a barrage, it makes you feel safer.) After rowing for what later turned out to be only 5 or 6 minutes we reached land. The first two scouts took off inland before the boat was even clear of the water as there wasn't any indication we had been seen. We had expected trouble from the start but then patrols always do. Our first objective was reached with no trouble, just sweat. No, two was where we expected trouble and our premonitions were well founded. There we captured an entire outpost, still nothing serious. After that we became aware of the early morning light. In fact

it was broad daylight and us a mile on the wrong side of the river. It was too late and too light to take any precautions coming back so we simply marched the prisoners straight across country. On the river, we found another boat, the Krauts furnishing locomotion. Only when we reached our own line again did we realize how tired we actually were, our feet were soaked with icy water, but we were back.

The next night the 82d, led by the 505th Parachute Infantry, crossed the Elbe at the point we had patrolled. In the days following the 82d made long dashes into enemy territory netting us a captured C. P., countless prisoners, and a complete disruption of enemy communications. The ease with which this was accomplished indicated the rapid disintegration of the German Army in front of us. On the 5th we drove through to the Russian Army only five miles from our main forces. For three hours we drove through a road clogged with men and material of a defeated army, the sight of which will never be forgotten by those who saw it. Tiger tanks, with 88's broken

and many growling ruslys; flank weapons, their muzzles pointed skyward, but the German weapons still kept their sinister appearance for us to see them all before under different circumstances. Heavily fortified positions were now barnless, ruined rifles and helmets littered the ground. The 21st Army had surrendered to the 82d Airborne Division. The crushed German Army, a people's Army whose exisstance has caused misery and the loss of property and destruction to millions. This Army which lived by the sword has died by the sword.

The Russian Army was a night to spearhead of the Red Forces. They also utilized all captured enemy vehicles. At the head of the column was a huge Red Flag. The Russkies are a rugged looking lot of boys and any company clerk will tell you.

Every one had a hat of curly black hair with a Red Star in front of it. Blouses with huge epaulettes on the shoulders, baggy pants with black boots, just as you had seen them in pictures, they were unmistakable. It seemed every one had an automatic

most had long swords dangling to their toes. Although rather violent in nature they are cheerful and friendly. All Russian soldiers salute when they shake hands with you. Getting into the spirit of things the Yanks were all saluting as if we'd done it all our lives. The Russians were all happy that day and after drinking Vodka, who wouldn't be happy? Some executed mimble jigs and reels and sang some Come-All-Ye's and vied with each other in downing glasses of 98% of this and 2% of another. The gaitey was so spontaneous you couldn't refrain from attempting a jig yourself. By now the Americans and Russkies swept along by the momentum of the occasion were busily saluting one another and talking to each other in their own tongue, oblivious to the fact no one understood anyone.

This is the end of Our War over here so little else remains to be told. Everyone is busy figuring out their points or sweating out that PFC! Pacific First Class! All I have to say is if I ever get that 85 points, look out General Hershey, I bite!

MICHAEL BRADFORD:

### FUTURE

I don't know whether to pray or cry  
 Though much I've suffered  
 my eyes are dry  
 For I've been freed  
 I'm going HOME  
 Back to farming Poland's loam

The Allies came,  
 they won the war  
 Carried the fight  
 to Germany's core  
 They brought an end  
 to all the things  
 Nazi DOMINATION  
 inevitably brings

I wish my husband  
 was still alive  
 To witness thefeat  
 of the 82nd's drive  
 Countless people  
 who I'll never know  
 Were saved by these "Troopers"  
 I love them so

They've given me shelter,  
 a bed of my own  
 These men from DEMOCRACY  
 have richly sown  
 Seeds of kindness,  
 friendship and hope  
 American traits  
 so limitless in scope.

I've been freed,  
 I'm going home  
 Back to farming  
 Poland's loam  
 I live again  
 because I'm FREE  
 "GOD BLESS"  
 the Allied Victory.

Perhaps I'll have  
 another chance  
 To hear the music,  
 see the dance  
 Of Polish free,  
 gay and strong  
 And gladden my heart  
 'midst their throng

Now is the time  
 for forbearance and prayer  
 In thanks for FREEDOM  
 from want and care  
 Take up my life  
 in peace again  
 Harmony and work  
 with my fellow men  
 The future holds  
 no doubts for me  
 With God's help  
 I'm sure I'll see  
 A better Poland  
 whose liberty  
 Will be safe from German treachery

### TOMORROW



No "Nurse-Draft" Problem Here Russian Girl medic meets 82nd Airborne Medic in Grabow - Germany

### Life - Time - Fortune

Correspondent found in  
 Wovoline Prison Camp

Among the prisoners released by the 82d "All American" Airborne Division from the concentration camp at Ludwigslust, Germany, was Life-Time-Fortune Correspondent Professor David Rousset, ex Paris philosopher, journalist, and political thinker, was arrested by the Germans late in 1943 for editing a political publication with the Paris Underground. Forced to work in the mines near Brunswick, Rousset was only recently transferred to the Wovoline concentration camp.

### AIRBORNE

"Where is the Prince who can afford so to cover his country with troops for its defense, as that 10,000 men, descending from the clouds, might not, in many places, do an infinite deal of mischief before a force could be brought together to repel them?"

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN  
 1784

### Two down and one to go

by Gordon F. Adams

The private observations of a Private  
 82d trooper

On the evening of the 28th of April our lieutenant gave us the good news, we were to have the dubious honor of being the first to cross the Elbe River on a night patrol. Up till now we had felt fairly safe, the war was a long way off and all over but the fighting. Didn't the newspapers say so?

Anyway at 7:30 we were on our way, armed to the teeth and intent on destroying that constant source of aggravation, the kraut soldier. In order to do so we had to cross the Elbe River, walk miles behind enemy lines and recross the river after having observed all we could. It sounds simple. A night patrol is one of the most distasteful jobs a soldier has to pull, certainly one of the most nerve-wracking. Two hours later we reached the river. There were British soldiers there who had collected all the eggs in the deserted town so we had eggs for supper. While eating our eggs our guards captured six fully armed German soldiers who were surrendering. This was to be the first of thousands for the 82d. Apparently the Krauts felt worse that night than we did which would make them practically pitiful. After waiting hours our assault boat arrived, so, at three-thirty we started. First we carried it to the water's edge, next all ammunition was placed in a sack. In case we were fired on it wouldn't drag us down. Then into the boat. By this time my shaky little incisors were rattling loudly,

USE THIS SPACE FOR YOUR OWN EDITORIAL OR LETTER HOME

Somewhere in Germany

JOIN THE EIGHTY-SECOND "ALL AMERICAN" AIRBORNE DIVISION ASSOCIATION

# INTRODUCING OUR NEW BRIGADIER GENERAL IRA P SWIFT

## New Ast C.G. receives Brigadier Star in surprise ceremony

Brig. Gen. Ira P. Swift, Ast Div. Commander since December, received the coveted star symbolic of a general officer in a surprise ceremony before the 82d Airborne Division Field Hdqs. on April 14. The new insignia of rank was pinned on Gen. Swift's uniform by the Division Commanding General Major Gen. Gavin and Brig. Gen. Francis Andrew March, Div. Art. Commander. About 1:30 in the afternoon on April 14, Gen. Swift, then Col. Swift was called back to the C. P. where a formation of Div. Hdqs. and Staff personnel waited for the surprise ceremony. His date of rank is officially 20 March 1945.

The new Ast. Commanding General has been Ast. Div. Commander since early in December 1944. He was active in both the Ardennes and German operations. Moving into the Bulge operation a few days after joining the division the General says he was very much impressed with the self reliance and esprit de corps of the Airborne Soldier. "They seem to move forward and dive into a job more readily than the regular infantry I had come in contact with," said the tall, greying veteran of the 2d Armored Division. "Soldiers in the Second Armored often compared their attached infantry units to Paratroopers. They always praised the aggressiveness of the Airborne Skytroopers and expressed a strong desire to fight with them." (This respect and mutual admiration as fighting men between the 82d and the 2d Armored may date back as far as Ft. Benning training days when the 504th and 505th slugged it out with the 2d Armored in Phenix City's famed Cotton Fish Camp and other local brawling areas.) After joining the Division General Swift soon was able to see the subject of Armored admiration in action. "My observations in the bitter fighting of the Bulge were that the Skytroopers seem to have more self reliance as individuals." The 82d Airborne soldiers seem to have a double Esprit de Corps, according to Gen. Swift. In addition to great unit pride in the oldest and most distinguished Airborne Div. each and every Airborne Soldier seems to fight a little harder because he's a paratrooper. The older Glidermen are just as indignant if anyone suggests that they are not every bit as good as the paratroopers so the Esprit goes both ways. The men are convinced that they not only belong to the world's greatest Division but that they are individually cut from the pattern of the world's best in fighting men. Gen. Swift himself is a fully qualified jumper with 6 jumps to his credit. He took his Parachute Training in France shortly after returning from the Belgium Operation because he wanted to do everything the men are asked to do."



Generals 3 - Brigadier General Francis A. March, Division Artillery commander and Major General James M. Gavin, 82 Division commander pin the coveted Star on the ast. Division commander Brigadier General Ira P. Swift.

## GENERAL SWIFT

### Fourteenth 82nd General Officer

Gen. Swift is fourteenth in the long and distinguished list of Generals boasted by the 82d "All American" in its 3 years since reactivation. Beginning with four star General Omar N. Bradley, Division Commanders were in order: Bradley, who organized the Division, Major Gen. Matthew B. Ridgway, who commanded through the campaigns in Sicily, Italy and Normandy, and

## "SLIM JIM"



Major General James M. Gavin

Major Gen. James M. Gavin has commanded through Holland, the Bulge, the Rhine Sack, and Central Germany.

Ast. Division Commanders have included Gen. Ridgway under Gen. Bradley, Brig. Gen. Don. F. Pratt, who later went to the 101st and was killed in Normandy, Maj. Gen. Wm. M. "Bud" Miley, now commanding the 17th Airborne, Brig. Gen. Charles L. Keeran, Maj. Gen. Gavin, and Brig. Gen. Swift.

Artillery Generals were headed by Maj. Gen. Joseph M. Swing, now commanding the 11th Airborne in the Pacific, Maj. Gen. Maxwell D. Taylor, commanding the 101st Airborne, and Brig. Gen. Francis A. March, the present Artillery General.

Colonels who left the Division to become Generals elsewhere are Brig. Gen. Steward Cutler, now with Allied Airborne Army, Brig. Gen. Claudio M. Easly, former 325th commander, Brig. Gen. Ralph P. "Doc" Eaton, Chief of Staff with the 18th Airborne Corps, and Brig. General Pope Ass. Div. Commander of the 86th Division.

Lt. Gen. Johnathan "Skinny" Wainwright, hero of Bataan, was in the 82d during the last war as was Lt. Gen. T. C. H. Lee, Eisenhower's Deputy and Com. Z Commander in the E. T. O. They were G-3 and G-2 respectively.

In Gavin, Taylor, Swing and Miley, the 82d as the first airborne division boasts prior rights on the Commanding Generals of every airborne division which has seen combat to date. Add to this "Mr. Airborne" Maj. Gen. Ridgway, commanding the 18th Airborne Corps, and the 82d can take great pride in its virtual domination of field command in the Airborne game. W.F.D.

In Oct. 1944, Gen. Swift was back in the harness as an armored regimental commander, this time with the 2d Armored Division. He was with old "Blood and Guts" Division when they cracked the Siegfried Line. In this campaign the General received the Silver Star for Gallantry in Action during the 2d Armored's drive toward the Ruhr in the Baweller sector. He also was awarded the Bronze Star for heroic action during the seizure, occupation and defense of the hard-won Ederen area in Western Germany.

The General holds the Legion of Merit for outstanding service in the preparation of important legislative plans affecting the organization of the army. Most recent of his numerous decorations is the French Croix de Guerre presented by Gen. Charles DeGaulle for exceptional service in battle rendered in the beginning of the Operations to liberate France.

The new Ast. Commanding General, familiar to us all for his constant supervision of the Preparatory Training Program in France, likes to get down to the smallest units where he can see firsthand what goes on with the men who really fight the war. This attitude both in and out of battle is consistent with the custom of Division leaders from the Commanding General down, and may partially explain what Gen. Swift calls the extreme mobility and Esprit de Corps of the "All American" Troopers.

Gen. Swift's interests on the home front are well taken care of by his wife Gertrude and their two daughters Barbara 19 and Joanne 15. W.F.D.

## ENTERTAINMENT CORNER SPECIAL SERVICE ROUND UP

A long list of Stage, screen, and sports celebrities has entertained "All Americans" in the lulls between missions.

Variety has always been the spice of Vaudeville and the French, G. I., and U. S. O. shows presented by Special Service as a supplement to the ever popular "ack-ack" were no exception. The celebrated gams that graced the prosidium ran the gauntlet all the way from the knobby knees of the lodacious old ballplayer, Onkel Frankie Frisch, to the curvaceous calves of the ballroom slayer, lovely Marlene Dietrich. Onkel Frank, the old Fordham Flash, dropped in on us with a surprise visit with the baseball troops including baseball stars "Bucky" Walters, "Dutch" Leonard, Mel Ott, and sportscaster Roy Stockton. They came to the 82d first and they'll remember it longest, judging by their enthusiasm both during their visit and the mail that is still dropping into the Special Service Office on occasion. Incidentally, all four are going great in the current baseball season. "Dutch" Leonard pitched and won the season opener for the Senators and has been fanning the corners with his knuckleball ever since "Bucky" Walters as usual will win his 20 games for Cincinnati. He didn't finish the opener but, neither did he lose it as the Reds went on to

All day yesterday, men of the town dug graves six feet deep in the sandy soil of a tree-shaded park and carried bodies of the dead from the concentration camp. There were 1000 bodies in all. Eight hundred had been buried in a woods, in common graves. Two hundred others now rest in Christian graves in Ludwigslust.

The citizens of Ludwigslust marched along four long rows of graves and looked at the bodies. The dead were shrouded in sheets, but their gaunt, distorted faces were bared for all to see.

Most of the Germans, hats in hand at the order of GIs, did not appear greatly moved by the grim sight. A few women cried; most did not.

Five Wehrmacht generals and other German officers marched along the long rows, too. Many avoided looking at the twisted, gaunt bodies. Many looked, but apparently saw nothing; death to them was a commonplace.

Yesterday, when civilians were escorted through the concentration camp, they were not so stoic. Many women fainted at the sights and smells. Many men were profoundly affected by the brick building with only straw for floors, the barbed wire enclosures, the unbelievable squalor that surrounded the dead. The living and the half-alive were worst: 700 horribly emaciated slave laborers were taken to hospitals from the camp. Already, 57 have died. Many more are yet to die.

At the sound of funeral music from the 82d Airborne Division band, civilians, one at the head

and one at the feet of each of the dead, lowered the bodies into their last resting places. At the head of each grave was a cross raised by the citizens of Ludwigslust. Every fourth one was a Cross of David.

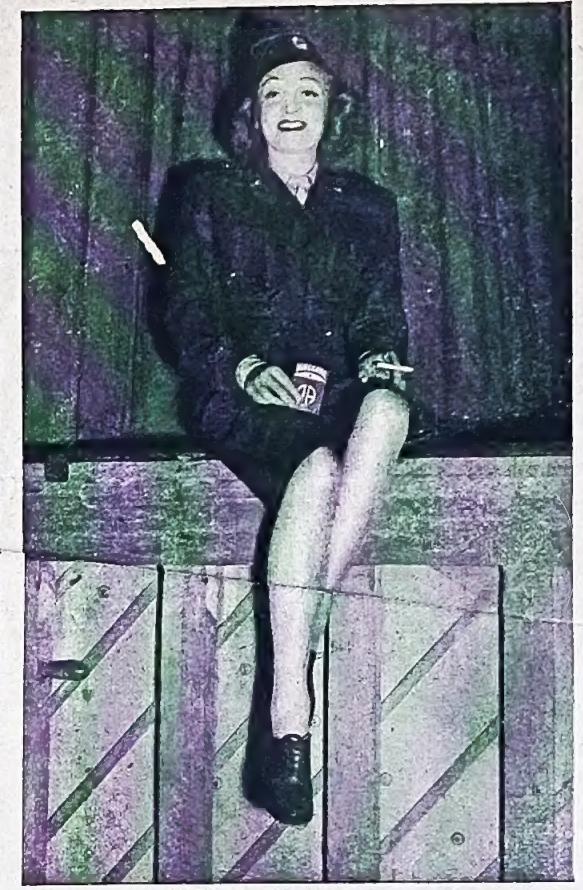
The new burgomaster — a tall, spectacled old man with white hair and a top hat — spoke first. He told the Germans of the finding of the bodies, of their responsibility for the Ludwigslust concentration camp.

82d Division Chaplains then said prayer services which were translated into German. The band played the American national anthem. Taps sounded over the vast assembly, and the Germans began covering the bodies with soft, yellow sand.

"The world has long been horrified at the crimes of the German nation; these crimes were never clearly brought to light until the armies of the United Nations overran Germany. This is not war as conducted

by the international rules of warfare. This is murder such as is not even known among savages.

"Though you claim no knowledge of these acts you are still individually and collectively responsible for these atrocities, for they were committed by a government elected to office by yourselves in 1933 and continued in office by your indifference to organized brutality. It should be the firm resolve of the German people that never again should any leader or party bring them to such moral degradation as is exhibited here. It is the custom of the United States Army through its Chaplains' Corps to insure a proper and decent burial to any deceased person whether he be civilian, or soldier, friend or foe, according to religious preference. The Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces has ordered that all atrocity victims be buried in a public place, and that the cemetery be given the same perpetual care that is given to all military cemeteries. Crosses will be placed at the heads of the graves of Jews, Protestant, Catholic and Jewish prayers will be said by Chaplains Wood, Hannan and Wall of the 82d Airborne Division for these victims as we lay them to rest and commit them into the hands of our Heavenly Father in the hope that the world will not again be faced with such barbarity.



## "ALL AMERICAN" ENTERTAINER

### Trouper Dietrich

"See what the boys in the jump boots will have"

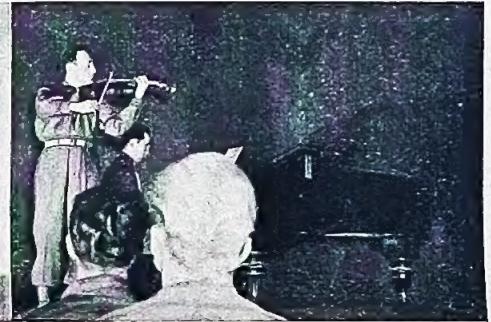


THE BALL TEAM

Gavin, Walters, Ott, Leonard, Frisch



The "G.I.'S Favorite" Mickey Rooney



Heifitz fiddles while Cologne Burns

## CHAPLAINS ADDRESS TO THE PEOPLE OF LUDWIGSLUST

by Major P. H. Woods

We are assembled here today before God and in the sight of man to give a proper and reverent burial to the victims of atrocities committed by armed forces in the name and by the order of the German Government. These 200 bodies were found by the American army in a concentration camp 4 miles north of the city of Ludwigslust.

The crimes here committed in the name of the German people and by their acquirers were minor compared to those to be found in concentration camps elsewhere in Germany. Here there were no gas chambers, no crematoria; these men of Holland, Russia, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and France were simply allowed to starve to death. Within 4 miles of your comfortable homes 4,000 men were forced to live like animals, deprived even of the food you would give to your dogs. In three weeks 1,000 of these men were starved to death; 800 of them were buried in pits in the nearby woods. These 200 who lie before us in these graves were found piled 4 & 5 feet high in one building and lying with the sick and dying in other buildings.

"The world has long been horrified at the crimes of the German nation; these crimes were never clearly brought to light until the armies of the United Nations overran Germany. This is not war as conducted



10,000 Strong they turned out the Citizens of Ludwigslust. Citizens of every profession to dig the graves and view the bodies of those they persecuted. With them too, come 5 Wehrmacht Generals and many other German officers, officers of an army that had Sanctioned this great crime against justice, decency, Humanity.

## Discharge . . .

### The Redeployment and Reassignment System

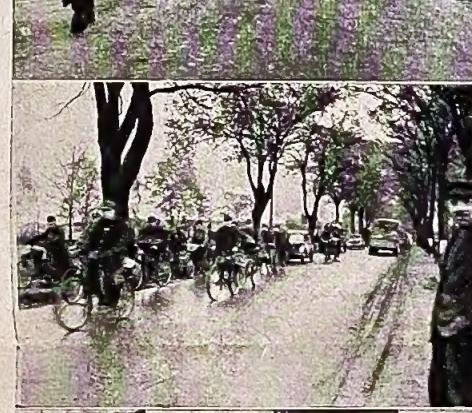
Other than payday, or sweating out the chow line, what is more important to the average G.I. than the point system? I think it would be safe to say that the very thought of it takes his breath away, and since he thinks of it all the time it's a wonder he breathes at all. I've checked around, tested here and there, and a guy with more than 100 points is a rare as a synagogue in Berlin. These high point guys are really on the varsity, they can't miss. If I could score for a hundred points I'd gladly spend any weekend you say in bed with a wet walrus. All this is a little vague, isn't it; but we have a few moments, haven't we? But to continue this little monograph: a fellow with eighty-five points has a chance to be discharged. He has a chance to get out, to *allez, parti, via*, or anything you want to call it. It's out of this world and I know it, but the Army has come out flat-footedly and said so.

## Dont Get Caught With your points Down

Webster gives us two definitions for this lovable, this gracious word discharge. 1. "A yellowish-white opaque creamy matter produced by suppuration, chiefly exudate and disintegrating tissues with bacteria and leucocytes." Now anyone with half an eye can see that this definition is not only depressing and offensive, but is hardly applicable to matter at hand. However, he redeems himself and says, 2. "To unload, to absolve, to free from that which oppresses. To let go, to dismiss." He actually gets lyrical with this last one. Read it over again, savor the words, let them roll over your tongue. Exhilarating isn't it? A discharge doesn't mean any more to a soldier than the ownership of 1000 shares of American Telephone and Telegraph, or to be able to call Rockefeller Uncle John. It used to be, and don't correct me, according to Omar Khayyam, "A loaf of bread, a jug of wine, and thou beside me singing in the wilderness." All this has been changed and brought up to date. All,

that is, excepting the jug of wine. It's still kicking around. The revised version goes, "A silver star, a purple heart, and thou (those eighty-five points) beside me, (or better still, on the service record) singing in the wilderness (Germany)."

Everybody can't sing though. There's a bunch of guys with only forty, sixty, or seventy-five points. They're as cheerful as a night in an artificial limb factory. The best they can hope for is that the Army Pigalle, or the campaign of the Via Roma, for example. With a break like this many more could join the happy throng of eighty-five points. On the other hand, it won't be so bad. According to the National Geographic, India abounds with interesting and colorful flora and fauna. The flora, or it's fauna, absolutely lurk all about Burma. They tell me that you can't walk down the street without bumping into some of it. There might be some of you who don't give a damn about fauna, and even some who find flora execrable (go look up the meaning yourself, I had to), but then there's no pleasing some people. At any rate, which ever group you find yourself in, I'm sure that everything will work out just peachy.



#### The Last Mile —

This is the story of the most unbelievable sight in two years of combat for the skytroopers of the 82d All American Airborne Division. Through Sicily, Italy, Normandy, Holland, Belgium, and all over western and northern Germany the troopers fought, but never in that abundance of unforgettable experiences did anything stamp a deeper impression than the surrender of the 21st German Army at the Bleckede Bridgehead in north Germany. Once in Sicily, 20,000 beaten Italians had surrendered to the All American Paratroopers, but then the Germans had laughed, "Italians were but little children beside the super race". Now, almost two years later, the same 82d Division once more sees a mass surrender through its battle tested lines. This time it's a German surrender, not a patry 20,000, but an estimated 150,000, jamming the roads in the disorganized hoards of a beaten army, a beaten people; the same type disorganized stampede that had brought on German sners two years earlier when the people of another beaten dictator could no longer see honor, hope, or salvation in death and destruction.



YESTERDAY - SLAVERY

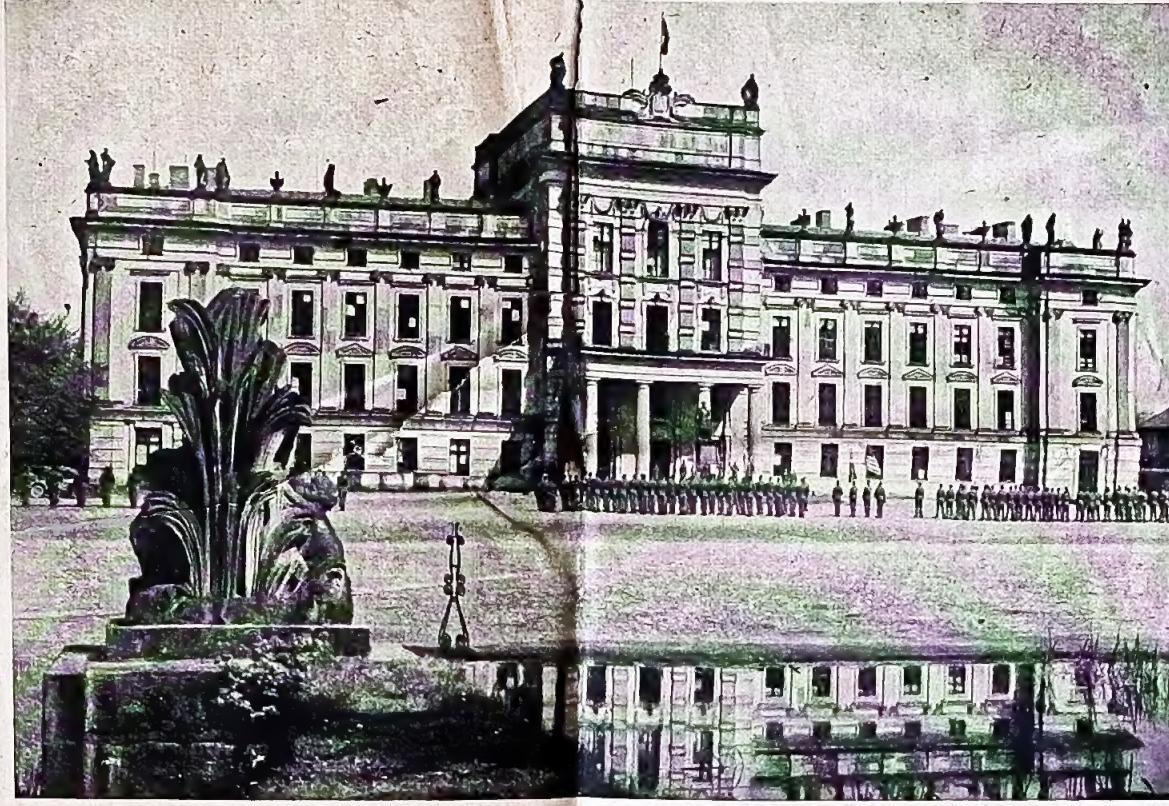


TODAY - FREEDOM



TOMORROW - HOME

# V-E DAY



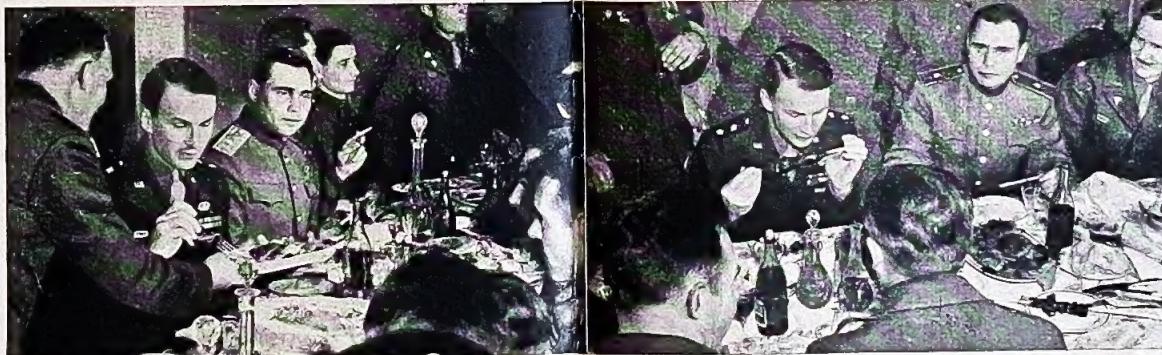
The American Flag flies over the palace of the Herzog von Mecklenburg-Schwerin — 82 Airborne Div. C.P. — Here Surrender Papers were signed —

#### MEETING THE RUSSIANS



**INFORMAL** — All Along the front "Troopers" met the Russian Doughboys and Tankers.

**FORMAL** — Anglo-American Honor Guard Passes in Review for Russian, British and American Generals.

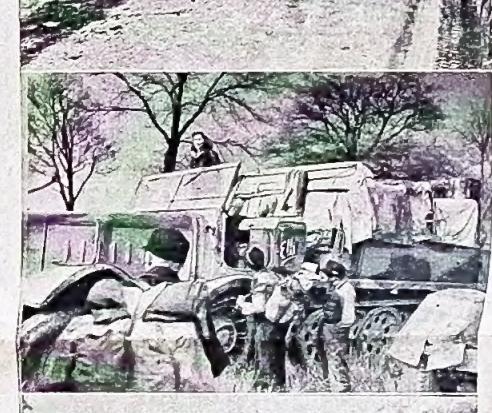


Serving

General Souprounoff plays Host to General Gavin at Russian Feast



Caucasian Shashlik — Russian American relations A No. 11!



#### The Last Mile (continued)

rican Paratroopers, but then the Germans had laughed, "Italians were but little children beside the super race". Now, almost two years later, the same 82d Division once more sees a mass surrender through its battle tested lines. This time it's a German surrender, not a patry 20,000, but an estimated 150,000, jamming the roads in the disorganized hoards of a beaten army, a beaten people; the same type disorganized stampede that had brought on German sners two years earlier when the people of another beaten dictator could no longer see honor, hope, or salvation in death and destruction.

